

HUMBOLDT BAY FIRE JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY

FIRST QUARTER (JANUARY - MARCH) 2021



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FIRE CHIEF'S MESSAGE

WRITTEN BY FIRE CHIEF SEAN ROBERTSON

Welcome to the first quarter newsletter of 2021 from Humboldt Bay Fire. It has been another busy albeit fruitful first quarter for Humboldt Bay Fire. We began the year on a high note with a 3-person Firefighter Recruit academy to fill positions that were vacant due to retirements. The recruits went through the 8-week academy and became well-versed in hose, ladders, fire attack, fire dynamics, rescue, search operations, rope rescue, haz mat, community risk reduction, mental health, EMS, water operations, firefighter rescue, wildland firefighting, and confined space operations.



Through the efforts of the Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association, Measure Z funds were used to complete the renovation project at our Chris Kemp training center. This project paved the gravel roadways, replaced the security fence, and re-painted the training tower. These improvements are a huge benefit to HBF and other agency firefighters, as well as all our other public safety partners, in improved training efficiency and effectiveness.

All personnel at HBF were offered the Covid-19 vaccine through the County Public Health Department. The vaccine and a move to a lower tier restriction has meant a return of certain services for us. Our Station 1 is open to the public, and we have begun scheduling CPR and First Aid classes again. We are able to regularly perform car seat checks and smoke alarm installations. Our firefighters are able to meet for group trainings and participate in multi-company drills. We continue to follow enhanced protective clothing measures when responding to incidents, and expect to do so for the foreseeable future. Since January 2021 HBF EMT's and Paramedics have participated in the weekly vaccine clinics coordinated by County Public Health, assisting in vaccinating over 110,000 Humboldt residents.

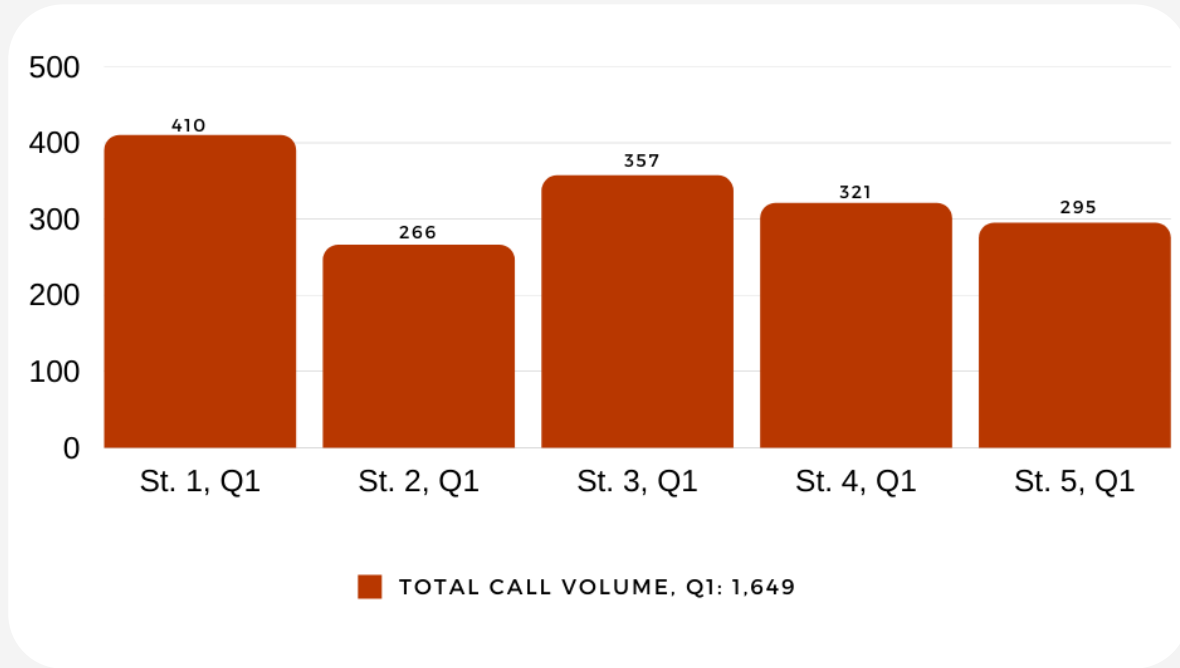
We have secured several grants this quarter including an expected \$71,000 in Covid-19 reimbursements from FEMA, a \$90,000 energy resiliency grant from PG&E for station generator replacement, and a \$180,000 rural EMS grant from SAHMSA. The EMS grant is being utilized to purchase additional ALS equipment, send our Firefighter/EMT's to Paramedic school, and to conduct a Community Paramedicine Feasibility Study. These grants fit directly into our strategic goals, and will go a long way to helping us achieve them in a shorter time frame. Effective strategic goals allow us to quickly take advantage of such great opportunities!

Along with everyone else on our beautiful planet we are optimistically looking forward to emerging from the terrible social and economic shadow of the pandemic, and lift our eyes, arms, and hearts towards a brighter future.

Thank you for all your support!
Sean Robertson, Fire Chief

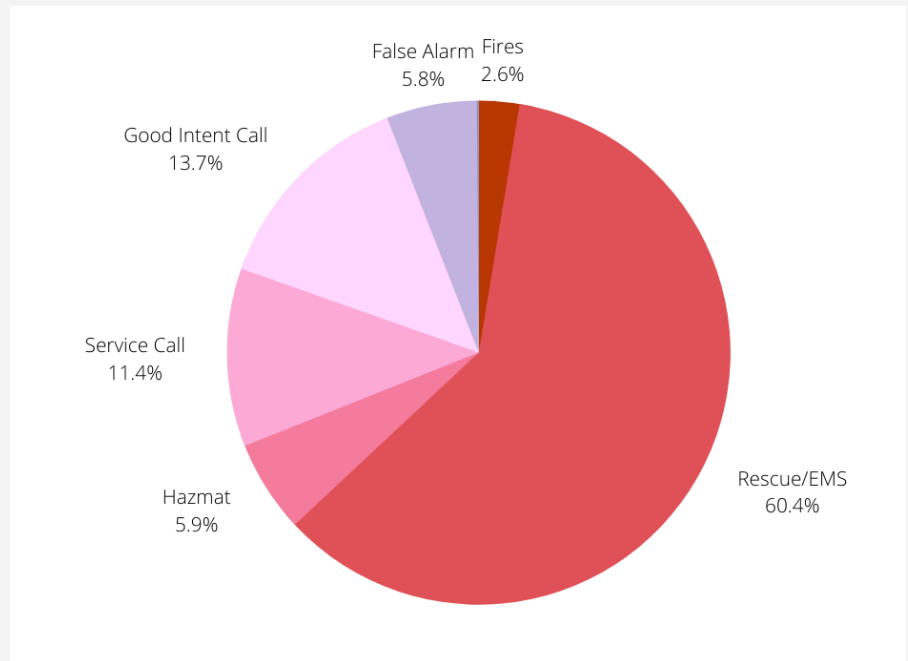


FIRST QUARTER STATS



MAJOR INCIDENT TYPE

<i>FIRES</i>	43
<i>RESCUE & EMS</i>	999
<i>HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS</i>	98
<i>SERVICE CALL</i>	98
<i>GOOD INTENT CALL</i>	226
<i>FALSE ALARM/CALL</i>	96
<i>SPECIAL INCIDENT TYPE</i>	2



FIREFIGHTERS IN FOCUS

FIREFIGHTER BARNES, FIREFIGHTER GORDINIER & FIREFIGHTER SAKKIS

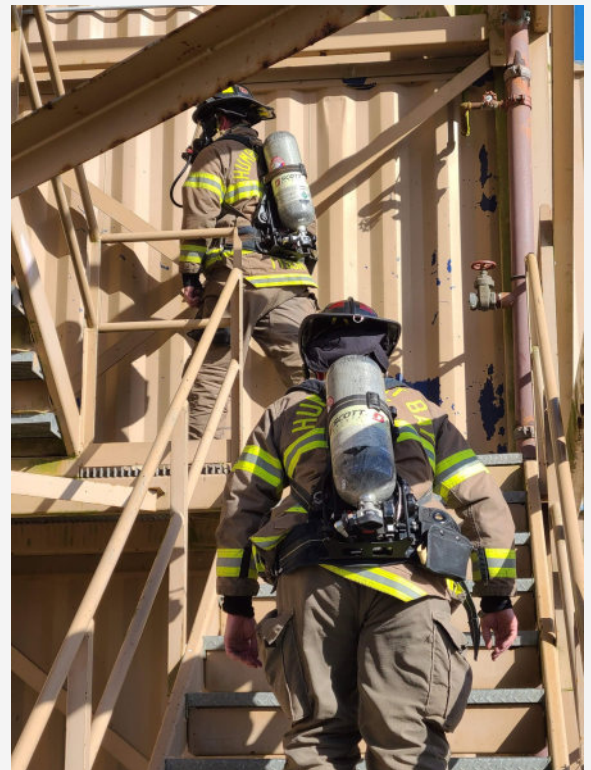
Griffin began his career in the fire service as a Student Firefighter at UC Davis. He has since worked as a wildland Firefighter in Montana and as an imperial Fire Safety Officer for a small, private fire department in a county far, far away. Griffin is privileged to be in a position where he may now serve a much larger population, and is honored to develop the skillsets of a Humboldt Bay Firefighter through the quality instruction of its staff. Griffin looks forward to the opportunity to develop this skillset further in hopes to join Humboldt Bay Fire's Water Rescue Team and other specialized units, such as Urban Search and Rescue, so he may best serve the communities in and around Eureka both on and off the fireground.

Scott grew up in Newport Beach California. He came to Humboldt County in 2009 to attend HSU. In 2010 he became a volunteer with Arcata Fire District and was hired there as a full time career firefighter in 2012. Scott lives in Trinidad with his wife Kristen and dog Koloa and enjoys all the outdoor opportunities Humboldt has to offer, especially surfing and fishing. He has spent the last two years completing Paramedic school and is excited to bring this service to the Humboldt Bay Fire community.

James was born in the East Bay Area. He attended San Francisco State University where he earned a bachelor's degree in business and marketing. James joined the fire service in 2010 as an intern and reservist for the San Francisco Fire Department. In 2012 he became a career firefighter with the Arcata Fire District. James is honored to serve the community as a member of Humboldt Bay Fire.



L TO R: FF GRIFFIN BARNES, FF SCOTT GORDINIER & FF JAMES SAKKIS





BABY PHOENIX

WARNING: POST CONTAINS INFORMATION DETAILING A MEDICAL AID CALL OF AN INFANT CHILD.

On Christmas Eve night, while many of us were resting with holiday anticipation, the crew of Engine 8113 got the worst call a firefighter can get – report of unconscious infant, not breathing.

The call came in one minute past 11:00p.m. on December 24, 2020, and the crew arrived at scene within 3 minutes of the initial dispatch. Engineer Brett Egbert, responsible for driving Engine 8113 to the incident, recalls having just studied that particular section of city maps that same day in a strange coincidence that felt “meant to be.”

Once inside, the crew found seven-month-old baby boy, Phoenix, lying on the ground pale, not breathing, and without a pulse. The crew immediately began performing CPR, administering oxygen, and preparing the cardiac monitor, an advanced life support tool, for defibrillation. Moments thereafter, the monitor delivered its first shock to baby Phoenix’ heart. With no improvement in conditions after the first shock was administered, Fire Captain and Paramedic John Goodman began Advanced Life Support measures including the administration of life-saving medications on scene. All the while, Firefighter Logan Bongio and Engineer Egbert continued CPR, sustaining baby Phoenix’ heartbeat and breathing while he was unable to do so for himself.

Soon, City Ambulance of Eureka arrived and assisted with Advanced Life Support care before transporting baby Phoenix to the ambulance. Fire Captain / Paramedic Goodman and Firefighter Bongio stayed with Baby Phoenix, continuing to provide care while en route to the hospital. In total, baby Phoenix was defibrillated three times, and received four rounds of Advanced Life Support medications.

After arriving at the hospital, Fire Captain / Paramedic Goodman continued CPR with Emergency Department staff for approximately 5 minutes before, miraculously, baby Phoenix’ heart rate stabilized and he once again had a pulse. In a huge sigh of relief, baby Phoenix was handed over to hospital staff, who took over his care. Once the hospital confirmed baby Phoenix was stable, the crew of Engine 8113 left the hospital, and returned to their station- forever changed by the events of a Christmas Eve they would never forget.

We are happy to report that, after receiving specialized care for some time in San Francisco, baby Phoenix has returned home to his family in Eureka.

*This story is shared with the permission and enthusiasm of baby Phoenix’ family.

UNION SPOTLIGHT

HUMBOLDT BAY FIREFIGHTERS LOCAL 652

Our local 652 Professional Fire Fighters Union is affiliated with the International Association of Fire Fighters and is part of Humboldt Del Norte Central Labor Council. Our goal is to work with our administration, parent agencies, and local partners to promote a safe and healthy work environment that will foster and retain quality employees who can best serve our community.

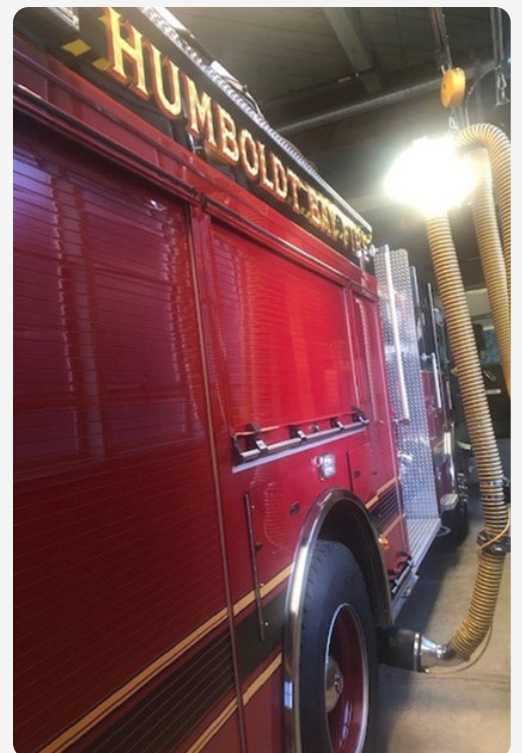
This quarter we wanted to talk about cancer, how it pertains to the fire service and the steps our department has taken over the past few years to help prevent this disease from occurring as frequently to your local firefighters.

I think by now it is fairly common knowledge that at face value, firefighting is a career path that makes the employee walk on the more dangerous-side of life, what with the whole burning buildings thing and all. What is starting to become more and more commonly talked about is the increased rate of diagnosis and death from cancer within the fire service. In 2015 a joint research study was published by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) in coordination with other major institutes that found that, when compared to the number of cancers expected using U.S. population rates, the firefighters in the study had a modest increase in cancer diagnoses (9% increase) and cancer-related deaths (14% increases). "Why is this the case, though?" you may ask. Well, there are many reasons, the biggest being the particulates we are exposed to and the temperatures we are at when exposed. These come from sources all around us; not just on fire emergencies: breathing the diesel exhaust from our engines and apparatus as we pull into and out of our stations, structure and vehicle fire smoke, any miscellaneous hazardous or carcinogenic material that people might have around their properties that can create a plume when it leaks or burns, topical exposure from refilling our own power tools with gas or oil, etc. We spend a lot of time training, salvaging belongings, investigating and cleaning up in and around the fire soot and thus breathing particulates or having direct skin contact from our dirty protective equipment. Our specific area is unique in the sense that Humboldt Bay Fire responds to an abnormally high number of fire-related calls per-capita when compared to the rest of the state.

As professional firefighters, we often read about cancer rates and studies to maintain awareness and attempt to employ safe work practices and we are proud to say that we do have quite a few cancer prevention tools and policies now in place to help protect ourselves.

All of the apparatus in our different fire stations are hooked up to PlymoVents® that help keep the air in our apparatus bays cleaner than they otherwise would be. All of our fire apparatuses are diesel engines, which produce a mixture of toxic gases and particulates from the engine combustion process. These hazardous vehicle exhaust emissions in a fire station are one of a firefighter's most significant cancer health risk factors. Having these vents is an important protective measure to minimize this hazard from our fire stations. These vents work by vacuuming onto the exhaust pipes of our apparatus so when the engine is turned on in the apparatus bay, the vent captures and removes the hazardous emissions straight from the exhaust pipe and releases them outside. Then as we pull away they release on their own.

A new technique that departments all over the world are working towards perfecting is a "clean-cab" concept. This is a strategy that minimizes to the greatest degree possible the fire ground contaminants that enter the crew cab while considering firefighter's health and optimal outcomes.



PlymoVent connected to our new Engine 8115 at Station 5

For Humboldt Bay Fire, we have taken numerous progressive steps towards achieving this clean cab concept. As some of you may know, Humboldt Bay Fire recently received two new fire engines that we ordered through Peirce. What you may not know is that they were designed with the clean-cab concept in mind. In all of our other engines, the engineer and firefighters' turnout gear has to be housed in the open cab because there is no compartment space for them. In our new engines, there is a compartment for the turnout gear of all personnel. This is significant because for days after a fire, regardless of how thoroughly our turnout gear is cleaned, our turnout gear will off-gas and continue to release carcinogenic particulates. While our administration has been supportive in getting us strong washing machine Extractors, they do not get 100% of the bad stuff out of our gear. Confining those toxins to a small compartment that we ourselves are not constantly exposed to can make a significant difference in minimizing our exposure.



Along the same line, we recently had our Policy Review Committee re-vamp our department policies to include a Post-Fire Decontamination Policy that allows for a quick decon process after incidents of any size. After fire control has been accomplished and before a crew reports to Rehabilitation for food and drinks, they will go through either a wet or dry decontamination process. The point of this is to leave as much of the contaminants as possible at the scene of the incident instead of bringing them back to the fire stations where we eat, sleep and live for days at a time. The policy then goes on to describe how to thoroughly clean and decontaminate ourselves, our gear and our apparatus upon our return to our stations. At our stations, we have more cleaning supplies that are solely for cleaning firefighter gear. The biggest, of which is our "Extractor": a large industrial washing machine in which we can wash our turnouts; that is separate from our regular washing machine, where we wash our normal station clothes and everyday items. This gets a large majority of the cancer-causing carcinogens out of our gear with just one wash, leading to minimized exposure risk when they sit in our lockers or back on the engine once they are cleaned.

Finally, one last progressive step that our members fought for and our department agreed to was to establish an account with an online Personnel Exposure Reporting System, where we can track recurring exposures like diesel exhaust, heavy lifting and loud noise exposures. We can also create specific incidents if we get exposed to something bigger or more dangerous, like a Hazardous Materials Incident, or a fire, or any harmful bodily fluids on a medical aid. This allows us to easily and professionally track times that we could have been exposed to harmful and dangerous situations for justifiable worker's compensation claims.

As a Union we are grateful for the current support of our administration to promote safe work place practices like contamination reduction and training. We are hoping that we will only increase our efforts to minimize our exposure to such harmful substances while still providing our community with top-notch service.

We want to thank everyone who continues to support the Humboldt Bay Fire Professional Fire Fighters Local 652



CPR/ CPR & FIRST AID CLASSES

Humboldt Bay Fire is currently offering a hybrid model for CPR and First Aid classes due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. In this model of CPR, the student receives a link to complete the instructional training at their own pace, in the comfort of their own home! Once complete, a one on one visit is required to demonstrate the hands on skills.

Please call (707) 441-4000 to ask about scheduling.

DISPATCHER IN FOCUS

MEET JADE!

Jade is our newest dispatcher who completed the Eureka Police and Fire Dispatch Training program on 3-6-2021! Jade was born and raised in Eureka and is a recent graduate of Eureka High School class of 2020. Jade is no stranger to chaos as she has 5 younger siblings ranging from ages 4-13. Jade had planned on going to college for a Criminal Science major but with the Covid-19 pandemic decided to instead apply for a dispatch position.

So far Jade's favorite part of dispatching is never having a dull moment and the continual learning experiences that comes with each and every call for service.

In Jades free time, she enjoys reading and teaching herself new skills. She is currently teaching herself to fix a vehicle! She also enjoys getting out via bicycling and skateboarding. We are very excited to have Jade as part of our team and look forward to seeing her journey continue and grow with the Eureka Police and Fire communications center!



THANK YOU JADE!!



EVERYDAY HEROES

WRITTEN BY AMY CONLIN

On January 2, 2021, Heidi Johnston and Patrick Mayo risked their lives to rescue a man who had driven into the bay. Without hesitation, Heidi jumped into the bay, swimming to the submerged vehicle to pull the driver out. Patrick, hearing her call, drove over in his boat and helped get the man aboard. An unidentified man also played a large role in getting the man out of his vehicle and transported to safety. Humboldt Bay Fire and the Eureka Police Department had the opportunity to thank Heidi and Patrick in a small award ceremony on February 7, 2021.



THE BEES ARE BACK!

HOW TO HANDLE A SWARM ENCOUNTER

As we move further into Spring, you may begin to see swarms of bees. These are largely harmless, but if you need to have one removed, the proper local resources to contact are humboldtbeekeepers.org or the Local Swarm Dispatch at: 707-599-7973.

Don't harm the swarm. Honey bee swarms are common, not dangerous. Swarming usually occurs in late Spring to early Summer when a large group of honey bees leaves to establish a new colony. So what can you do if you see one?



Option 1: Do nothing. Swarms are temporary. Appreciate from a distance.

Option 2: To have the swarm removed, call the local swarm Dispatch at 707-599-7973 or humboldtbeekeepers.org



EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS

WRITTEN BY BATTALION CHIEF CHRIS EMMONS

Humboldt Bay Fire's jurisdiction is in the heart of "Redwood Country". It's also in the heart of "Earthquake Country." With multiple earthquake fault lines in our area we frequently experience small shakers, but it's been several years since we have experienced a large earthquake that has caused significant damage. We are due. April is "Earthquake Preparedness Month". Humboldt Bay Fire is reminding the community of how to prepare for a seismic event. Now is the time.

What is the first step of being prepared for an earthquake? We know that there will be another major earthquake at some point and the best thing to do is prepare with a plan. Having a plan will reduce stress during the event, help make you safer during the event, and hasten your recovery following an earthquake.

"The Plan" should include the following:

1. Make your home safe. Strap down items that can tip over, i.e. water heater, entertainment centers, bookshelves, and other large furnishings. Establish all the possible ways to exit your house and keep them clear.
2. At least a three day supply (week supply recommended) of food, water, clothes, medical supplies, and other necessary equipment for everyone in the family.
3. Decide where and when to reunite your family should you be apart when the earthquake happens.
4. Choose a contact outside the immediate area to contact if family members are separated. Long distance service will probably be restored sooner than local. Do not use the phone immediately following the earthquake.
5. Know the policies of the school or daycare center your children attend.
6. If you have a family member who does not speak English, prepare an emergency card written in English indicating that person's identification, address, and any special needs. Have them carry the card with them.
7. Conduct Earthquake: Drop, Cover, and Hold drills. Know the safest place in your home.
8. Locate shutoff valves for water, gas and electricity. Know how to shut them off.
9. Make copies of vital records and keep them in a safe deposit box. Make sure the originals are stored safely. Take photos/videos of your valuables. Keep extra cash and change. ATM's may not work.
10. Before a quake, have knowledge of where your local shelters and emergency medical centers are. Contact your local Red Cross Chapter and Office of Emergency Services to obtain this information. Know the locations of your nearest fire and police stations.

In the event of a major earthquake here in Humboldt County, we need to work together and be self-sufficient. We have a beautiful area that we live in but with that beauty comes seclusion. Emergency Services will be busy and may not be able to respond to your location right away due to infrastructure damage, lack of resources, or other emergencies. It's imperative that we work with our neighbors, have a plan and help each other.



ANNIVERSARIES & RETIREMENTS

Anniversaries

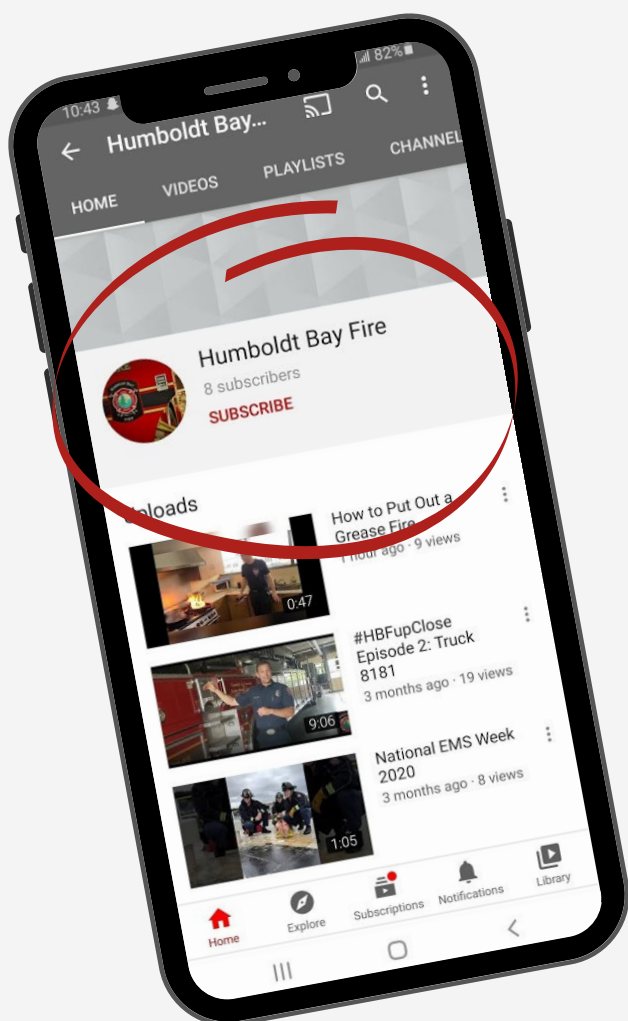
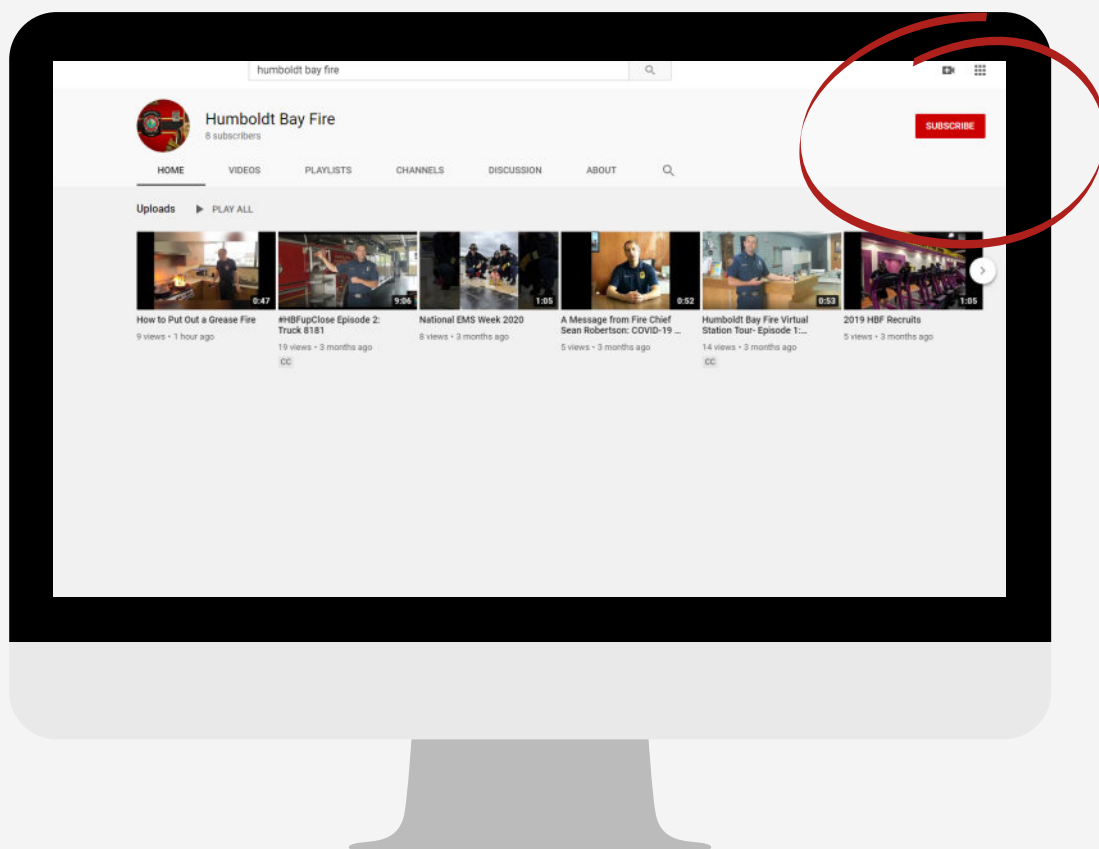
- Volunteer Fire Support Greg Jernigan, 37 yrs (March)
- Battalion Chief Tim Citro, 21 yrs (February)
- Engineer Colin Beddow, 18 yrs (January)
- Firefighter Jason Campillo, 18 yrs (January)
- Captain Bret Banducci, 16 yrs (January)
- Engineer Ray Marchi, 14 yrs (February)
- Captain Brandon Johnson, 12 yrs (January)
- Engineer Brett Christensen, 10 yrs (March)
- Captain David Terry, 10 yrs (March)
- Engineer Adam Bumgardner, 5 yrs (February)
- Engineer Kameron Waters, 5 yrs (February)
- Engineer Mike Tyson, 5 yrs (February)
- Executive Secretary Jenna Harris, 7 yrs (February)
- Firefighter Brittany Borges 1 yr (January)
- Firefighter Becca Ciszewski 1 yr (January)
- Firefighter Mason Console 1 yr (January)
- Firefighter Shane Elder 1 yr (January)
- Firefighter Wyatt Esola 1 yr (January)
- Firefighter Matt Parsons 1 yr (January)

Retirements

none



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